

BRITAIN JOYOUS, LOOKS FOR BIG AID FROM AMERICA

U. S. Now Will Have Im-
portant Part in Peace,
London Says

BELIEVES WILSON
CANNOT AVOID WAR

Fears Belgians Will Starve
When Our Relief
Work Ends

By ARTHUR S. DRAPER

(By Cable to The Tribune.)

London, Feb. 3.—America has already won a big victory. She has regained her place in the world, won back all her lost prestige. Britain and her allies welcome her action as an enormous moral endorsement and a tremendous material assistance.

I can state that Britain considers the President's action as marking the decisive point in the war, as bringing the United States up into a dominating place not only in the war, but in the peace that is to follow. The effect of America's action will be felt immediately, and it will grow as time goes on. One government official told me to-night he regarded it as the most heartening news in months.

Proud To Be Americans

Americans in London are holding a war dance to-night. They are proud and happy for the first time since the sinking of the Lusitania. They are proud they are Americans; proud their President had the courage to take the decisive action. Americans here know something of the hardships and distress of the war, but they feel the President has taken the only course left open to him.

Almost like a thunderbolt came the news of the American decision in the quiet of the Saturday half holiday. Most of the professional and business men of the city had departed for their country or city homes, but the news spread quickly and everywhere was hailed with joy, which was the more accentuated by the fact that the public had been generally led to believe that the President had determined to await an overt act by Germany before taking action.

Those newspapers which reached the streets early with the announcement were quickly seized, the most eager buyers being found among the Canadian and Australian soldiers on leave in the city.

Theatre Crowds Happy

The effect on the theatre crowds to-night was most apparent. These people, mostly women with their "bad escorts," seemed unusually buoyant and cheerful. There were no longer any references

to the unfortunate "too proud to fight" utterance, but rather a tremendous feeling of gratitude and respect for the President's act.

The drawbacks of the American action are almost as many as the advantages, and were quick to be recognized by British officials. The severance of relations between Germany and the United States deprives Entente prisoners in Germany and Austria of American assistance, for one thing, and there is grave doubt of the ability of any other neutral accomplishing the same results.

Then, there is the danger that now confronts Belgian relief work. The British fear that hundreds of thousands of Belgians will starve, once the American relief commission is withdrawn.

The status of Americans in Belgium attached to the Relief Commission is causing the Relief Commission anxiety. The London headquarters has cabled to Washington for instructions.

It is believed here that the rupture between the United States and Germany will result in the withdrawal of the American Minister, Brand Whitlock, from Belgium, but it is hoped that neutral nations will be able to continue the relief work.

Believe War Certain

The part that the United States will play in the war, however, is the chief topic of conversation. There is little belief felt in any quarter that America can now keep out of actual war. News of the sinking of the American steamer Housatonic confirmed the general belief that a few days only would suffice to see the United States drawn into the maelstrom.

Another topic of conversation is the possibility of the German merchantmen in American ports being seized and pressed into transatlantic service. With a great part of neutral shipping held in European ports on account of the German declaration, the addition to the Atlantic trade of all the German ships now in American ports would be of invaluable help, it is recognized.

Second only to the action of America herself is the effect it is bound to have on the European neutrals. They are awaiting America's lead, and some, if not all, are sure to follow her action. England awaits their action with the keenest of expectation.

Then comes the moral effect on the peoples of the Entente and the Central Powers. Upon those of the Allies it is bound to have a heartening and strengthening effect. Conversely, upon the peoples of the Central Powers America's action must have a demoralizing and depressing effect to know that the rest of the world is against them. This is what British statesmen mean when they rejoice over the moral support of America.

Lord Northcliffe voiced the very general feeling when he said to me to-night: "My view is that Great Britain is very glad of America's support. While we welcome her assistance in financing Russia, Italy, Rumania, Montenegro, Serbia and Belgium, we can finish the fighting job by ourselves. Her moral support is of immense value to us and to all neutrals."

"When the history of this war is written, the United States will want and will deserve a place. Americans are good fighters. Those now fighting in France prove that the present generation has lost none of the ability of their fathers and grandfathers. The Germans are desperate; they have gone mad."

Many Americans Sail Home

Although large crowds of homeward bound Americans left the city this morning, the demands for transportation were far less urgent than had been expected.

At the American Embassy and consulate the scene resembled that in the early days of the war. Crowds of American travellers were seeking passports and making inquiries.

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